(b) to (e) The Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 contains provisions to regulate the operation of cable television networks in the country and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. The cable operators are required to conform to the provisions of the said Act in their operations. There are no legal provisions in the said Act or the Rules framed thereunder to regulate the issue of earnings by a cable operator. However, the Tariff Orders issued by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) under the provisions of the TRAI Act would have impact on the over-ail earnings of the cable operators.

Pending cases and vacancies in Supreme Court

1852. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the number of cases pending in the Supreme Court as on date;

(b) whether there is any vacant post of judges in the Supreme Court;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the number of posts of Judges likely to fall vacant in the next six months?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) There are 29,439 cases (14,196-Admission and 15,243 - Regular) are pending in the Supreme Court as on 30.11.2004.

(b) As against 26 sanctioned posts of Judges, 25 Judges in position leaving one vacancy.

(c) This vacancy has fallen vacant *w.e.f.* 2.7.2004 due to the retirement of Shri Justice Doraiswami Raju.

(d) Two posts of Judges are to fall vacant during the next six months.

Method of execution of death sentence

1853. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN:
SHRI RAMAMUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Law Commission has recommended changes in the method of execution of death sentence;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it has been circulated to all the concerned Bar Councils, leading lawyers, public and experts for inviting their views on it;

(d) if so, the views expressed by them; and

(e) Government's views in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Law Commission of India has completed its study and submitted its 187th Report on 'Mode of Execution of Death Sentence and Incidental Matters'. The Law Commission made extensive consultations with eminent Advocates, Judges, Medical Practitioners, etc. before making the recommendations. The Report was laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 9.7.2004 and on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 12.7.2004. In this Report, the Law Commission has recommended that:—

(i) the alternate mode of execution of death sentence should be by administering lethal injection;

(ii) before passing final order as to the mode of execution of death sentence, the Court should hear the accused on that question;

(iii) A statutory right of appeal to the Supreme Court be provided against the judgment of High Court confirming or awarding death penalty; and

(iv) This appeal should be heard by a Bench consisting of atleast five Judges of the Supreme Court.

(e) The Report of the Law Commission has already been forwarded to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence and Department of Justice for further action.

Funds for construction of court buildings and residential quarters

1854. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Governments have sought assistance to improve the court buildings and for construction of residential colony for Judges;